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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/483,854	01/17/2000	Randy L. Knust	13169	8936

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EXAMINER

ASHBURN, STEVEN L

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3714

DATE MAILED: 06/14/2002

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/483,854

Applicant(s)

KNUST ET AL. 

Examiner

Steven Ashburn

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 21 March 2002.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-9 and 16 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-9 and 16 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.


MARK SAGER
PRIMARY EXAMINER**Attachment(s)**

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

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DETAILED ACTION

Allowable Subject Matter

The previous indication of allowable subject matter is withdrawn. An updated search identified additional prior art that renders the claimed the claimed subject matter unpatentable as detailed below.

Drawings

The corrected or substitute drawings were received on 03 January 2002. These drawings are acceptable.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent, or on an international application by another who has fulfilled the requirements of paragraphs (1), (2), and (4) of section 371(c) of this title before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent.

The changes made to 35 U.S.C. 102(e) by the American Inventors Protection Act of 1999 (AIPA) do not apply to the examination of this application as the application being examined was not (1) filed on or after November 29, 2000, or (2) voluntarily published under 35 U.S.C. 122(b). Therefore, this application is examined under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) prior to the amendment by the AIPA (pre-AIPA 35 U.S.C. 102(e)).

Claims 1, 2, 5, and 9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being clearly anticipated by *Schubert*, U.S. Patent 6,313,871 B1 (Nov. 6, 2001).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claim 8 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Schubert*.

Schubert discloses a system for monitoring chips on a gaming table wherein cameras are positioned within close proximity to the table to improve the cameras' view. *See fig. 1; col. 1:32-248*. The reference teaches placing the cameras beneath a raised platform or, alternatively, within the raised rail around the perimeter of the table. *See id.* Furthermore, the monitoring system is linked through a standard computer network to allow a remote observer at a remote terminal to selectively display the video images from any one of a plurality of gaming tables. *See fig. 9; col. 7:20-38*. Hence, *Schubert* teaches all the features of the claimed subject matter except a data input means for inputting alphanumeric data manually into the central computer. Regardless of the deficiency, the feature was known in the art at the time of the invention and would have been obvious to an artisan of ordinary skill.

Standard computer networks are notoriously well known to provide alphanumeric input devices allowing users to manually enter data into a central computer (e.g. keyboards). Thus, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify the tracking system taught by *Schubert*, wherein remote observers selectively monitor gaming table video via a central computer, to add a alpha-numeric input device to allow users a convenient and well-understood means for observers to selectively control a central computer to display gaming table video.

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Claims 3 and 4 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Schubert* in view of *Walsh*, U.S. Patent 5,726,706 (Mar. 10, 1998).

Schubert teaches all the features of the claimed subject matter except positioning lamps recessed beneath the platform. Regardless of the deficiencies, the features were known in the art at the time of the invention and would have been obvious to an artisan of ordinary skill in view of *Walsh*.

Walsh discloses a lighting security system in which lights and cameras are recessed within a curved fixture for illuminating and observing activity on a surface of interest. *See fig. 1; col. 1:39-61*. The fixture is adaptable to the shape of a gaming table to provide a functional and decorative lighting assembly allowing unobtrusive observation of gaming patrons and thereby promote a more congenial, but still secure gaming environment. *See id.*

In view of *Walsh*, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify the tracking system taught by *Schubert*, wherein cameras are positioned beneath the raised rail around the perimeter of the table, to add the feature of lights recessed beneath the platform to illuminate the gaming apparatus and provide improved lighting for the cameras to improve the accuracy chip recognition.

Claims 6 and 7 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Schubert* in view of *Mothwurf*, U.S. Patent 5,919,090 (Jul. 6, 1999).

Schubert teaches all the features of the claimed subject matter except uniquely identifying a gambler to the tracking system using a magnetic card stripe reader. Regardless of the deficiencies, the features were known in the art at the time of the invention and would have been obvious to an artisan of ordinary skill in view of *Mothwurf*.

Mothwurf discloses an analogous system for tracking wagering data at a gaming table. In particular, the reference describes identifying each gambler at a betting position using an electronically

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readable identity card and read unit at each position in order to track when and where each gambler was located. *See col. 7:28-65*. Notably, *Mothwurf* does not describe using a magnetic card stripe reader for identifying the player. Nonetheless, several types of electronically readable identity card are notoriously well known in the art including integrated circuit cards, magnetic stripe cards, and optically coded cards. Each type would function equivalently to uniquely identify a gambler at a betting position to the tracking system.

In view of *Mothwurf*, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify the tracking system taught by *Schubert* to add the feature of uniquely identifying a gambler to the tracking system using a magnetic card stripe reader to track when and where each gambler was located and thereby yielded more specific tracking data which may be used to enhance the operator's security or business data.

Claim 16 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Schubert* in view of *Cooper*, U.S. Patent 6,008,867 (Dec. 28, 1999).

Schubert discloses all the features of the claimed subject matter except serially coupling the central computer together with each table's multiplexer. Regardless of the deficiency, the feature was known in the art at the time of the invention and would have been obvious to an artisan of ordinary skill in view of *Cooper* and *Ebersole*.

Cooper discloses an analogous surveillance system for multiplexing a plurality of cameras banks to a central computer through a plurality of multiplexers to allow a single central processor to remotely monitor the plurality of camera banks. *See fig. 1; col. 1:21-2:53, 10:33-55*. Hence, *Cooper* suggests the claimed subject matter of coupling a plurality of multiplexers together to a central computer. However, the reference does not describe serially coupling the multiplexers. Nonetheless, this feature is well known in the art and would be obvious to an artisan of ordinary skill in view of *Ebersole*.

It is fundamental knowledge in the art to couple devices in various network topologies including serial (i.e. ring, token ring) and parallel (i.e. star) arrangements. Each topology is understood by artisans to possess certain advantages and disadvantages regarding data volume, robustness, physical size, and reconfigurability. *Ebersole* describes the basic features of the basic topologies. *See col. 1:18-2:16*. Notably, the reference discloses that star topologies are slower because the central computer must communicate with each node. *See id.* Furthermore, discloses that ring topologies allow the flexibility to easily add and remove devices. *See id.* Thus, *Ebersole* suggests the claimed feature of linking devices in serially (i.e. ring).

In view of *Cooper* and *Ebersole*, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify the gaming table tracking system taught by *Shubert*, wherein video tracking systems are linked to a standard computer network, to add the feature of serially coupling the central computer together with each table's multiplexer to allow a single central processor to track the activities of a plurality of gaming tables in a configuration that allow the flexibility to easily add and remove devices.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-9 and 16 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Steven Ashburn whose telephone number is 703 305 3543. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday thru Friday, 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Valencia Martin-Wallace can be reached on 703 308 4119. The

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fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are 703 872 9302 for regular communications and 703 872 9303 for After Final communications. Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703 308 1078.



Steven Ashburn
June 11, 2002



MARK SAGER
PRIMARY EXAMINER